



STATE OF WASHINGTON
WASHINGTON STATE BOARD OF HEALTH

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April 13, 2005

TO: Washington State Board of Health Members

FROM: Carl Osaki, Vice Chair

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY WASTEWATER TREATMENT PROGRAM

Background and Summary

The Board heard public testimony on the proposed small onsite sewage system rules at its March 9, 2005 meeting. Some of the testimony noted that there are many other sources of pollution that contribute to public health threats and to water quality degradation. Pacific County Commissioner Pat Hamilton called particular attention to a record of discharges from wastewater treatment plants.

Some Board members had additional questions about such discharges after hearing the public testimony. John Stormon, a hydrogeologist with the Department of Ecology, was in the audience and briefly described the activities of Ecology's Wastewater Treatment Program. He offered to return at a future meeting to discuss the program in more detail. Several Board members indicated that they would be interested in such a presentation.

I have therefore invited Mr. Stormon to present to the Board this morning. Attached are copies of his presentation, a Department of Ecology focus sheet on combined sewage overflows, and a spreadsheet describing overflow incidents in 2003.

The purpose of this presentation is to provide some additional context for the Board's work on onsite systems. The Board does not have authority over large wastewater treatment systems, which are regulated by the Department of Ecology. Wastewater treatment plant operators and the Department of Ecology work closely with state and local health departments when discharges create public health concerns. I am not recommending Board action.

Recommended Board Action

None.